(a) whether the present broadband penetration in India stands at a meagre 2.6 per cent with even lower figure for rural areas;

(b) whether BSNL with over 73 per cent of the available optical fiber route KM network has more than 32000 of its telephone exchanges connected by fiber;

(c) if so, whether the wireless technology can deliver broadband facilities to rural areas from these fiber terminal exchanges; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) As on 31 May, 2009, about 64 lakh broadband connections including about 3 lakh rural broadband connections have been provided in the country. BSNL has provided 3 lakh rural broadband connections out of a total of about 1.04 crore Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) representing the penetration of about 2.9% in rural areas.

(b) to (d) Yes, Sir. For delivering broadband facilities in rural areas, BSNL has planned to provide Broadband connectivity in 63,000 Rural Common Service Centres covering 7863 Rural Blocks through WiMAX and 3G(GSM) technologies using optical fibre network in a phased manner. BSNL has also planned to build a capacity of about 32.9 lakh connections on 3G network having broadband capabilities.

Telecom network expansion contract

2130. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has cautioned the BSNL on the security related aspects of awarding telecom network expansion contracts to China based Huawei;

(b) whether the Government has insisted on testing the equipment made by Huawei for trap doors, black boxes and malwares;

(c) whether Government is also insisting on tests for susceptibility of Huawei equipments to remote hacking; and

(d) if so, where the matter stands at present and by when a decision is likely to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) to (d) Sir, the tenders for procurement of 93 million lines for GSM equipment was floated by the four zones of BSNL on 01.05.2008. The tenders were further divided into four parts as detailed below:—

(i) Part I for 2G elements, Core and VAS elements.

(ii) Part II for 3G elements.

(iii) Part III for infrastructure items.

(iv) Part IV for operation and billing sub-systems.

Ministry of Home Affairs/Intelligence Bureau have raised concern over the presence of foreign companies, especially from certain countries in the critical and sensitive border areas, that may have national security implications. Accordingly, a security guideline was issued to BSNL. As per the security guidelines:—

- Before operationalisation of all the new systems, irrespective of origin of manufacturing, extensive security audit should be carried out to the effect that networks and its elements are free from any trapdoors/black boxes/malwares and susceptible to remote hacking. A self-certificate to that effect shall be submitted to TERM Cell of DoT for carrying out the security out the security audit and issuance of certificate.

  The bids are still under evaluation and no award of contract has been done.

Problem of congestion

†2131. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bihar, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are the worst sufferer of the problem of congestion of mobile signals;

(b) if so, the reasons for congestion and the rules in this regard; and

(c) the measures being taken by Government to solve the problem of congestion and by when this problem would be solved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT): (a) As per the latest Performance Monitoring Report (PMR) for the quarter ending March, 2009 issued by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI), Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh including Chhattisgarh are not the worst sufferer of the problem of congestion of mobile signals.

(b) Not applicable in view of (a) above.

(c) TRAI has prescribed Parameters for congestion of mobile signals in terms of Stand-alone Dedicated Control Channel (SDCCH) congestion and Traffic Channel (TCH) congestion. TRAI monitors these parameters through quarterly Performance Monitoring Report. To meet the benchmarks of congestion parameters, network augmentation and optimization is done by the service providers, which is a continuous process.

Ancient rock paintings

2132. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY:
SHRI NANDAMURI HARIKRISHNA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ancient rock paintings have been found in Srisailam hill ranges of Mahaboob Nagar district and Thadwai Mandal of Warrangal district of Andhra Pradesh;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.